



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WHITERIVER POSTMASTER CHARGED WITH THEFT OF OVER \$66,000

PHOENIX, Ariz. -- A federal grand jury in Phoenix returned August 30, 2006 a one count indictment against Lawrence Moreno, age 65, of Lakeside, Arizona, for Misappropriation of Postal Funds.

The indictment alleges that since August 26, 1989, Moreno was the Postmaster for the Whiteriver Post Office, in Whiteriver, Arizona. As Postmaster, Moreno's duties included the sale and purchase of postal products, and the maintenance of related financial records. During the period of November, 2003 through May, 2004, Moreno removed approximately \$66,110 from the Post Office in increments of approximately \$50 to \$600 a day and did not return the money to the Post Office or deposit the money in the Post Office's bank on behalf of the Post Office. Moreno ultimately took the Post Office's money to a local casino and lost the money while gambling with it. The money had been paid to the Post Office by purchasers of stamps and other floor stock. Moreno attempted to hide the unlawful conversion of the money by maintaining records indicating that the money was in fact in the Post Office in the form of stamp stock and had been deposited in the Post Office's bank on behalf of the Post Office.

A conviction for Misappropriation of Postal Funds carries a maximum penalty of 10 years, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, Judge Paul G. Rosenblatt will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General. The prosecution is being handled by Frederick A. Battista, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-0811-PCT-PGR
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-175(Moreno)

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